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v Pittsburgh

At a meeting of the Medical Class of the University of Maryland, held January 28th, 1880, Mr. WM. W. WATKINS was appointed Chairman, and C. J. GILLELAND, Secretary.

The following Resolution was offered and unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That a committee be appointed to present for the consideration and adoption of this meeting, an appropriate appeal on behalf of that portion of the Medical Class here assembled, addressed to each member of the Board of Trustees of this University, respectfully asking the immediate review and final repeal of that enactment, which requires each Student who shall matriculate after this session, to attend the demonstrations of a teacher of *Practical Anatomy* appointed by that Board.

The following gentlemen were then named by the Chairman as constituting this committee:

Messrs. CHARLES MINOR, J. A. TAYLOR, J. P. SMITH, P. H. GILMER, O. W. KEAN, W. G. EDWARDS, A. H. BAYLY, ROSS PEARCE, C. R. McCLELLAN, WM. POWER, M. M. Pallen, J. C. JENIFER, D. C. DE LEON, WASHINGTON FINDLEY and J. HANSON THOMAS.

The committee reported the accompanying Address, which was unanimously adopted and ordered to be printed, together with the rest of the proceedings of this meeting.

On motion the meeting adjourned.

C. J. GILLELAND, Secretary.

WM. W. WATKINS, Chairman.

To  
*Member of the Board of Trustees*

*of the University of Maryland:*

SIR,

In accordance with the foregoing resolution, we beg leave, as a committee on behalf of a large majority of our fellow-students, most respectfully to solicit your prompt attention to the subject of our appeal.

Aware that the interference of young men with the measures of their elders, is apt to be considered inappropriate and unwise, we would secure ourselves against that reflection by a candid exposition of our motives;—assuring you that the effort now made to obtain the repeal of an enactment which your body have thought proper to pass, does not spring from the idle and querulous propensity with which young men at college are so often charged, but from dispassionate deliberation;—prompted, we solemnly aver, by no impulse but a desire for the prosperity of the Institution of which we are members; a circumstance which involves so deeply the advancement of the science and art to which we have devoted ourselves, with the reputation and success of all those who go forth into the world under the auspices of her diploma. We confidently believe that we shall be acquitted of a desire rudely to interfere, while we briefly and distinctly set forth the grounds upon which we would earnestly urge the repeal of the law alluded to in the resolution.

1. We believe that the measure we dissent from, is not a usual one; we are not informed if such has been adopted in any other Institution in the United States; nor has it hitherto seemed expedient, we presume, to the Trustees of *this school*, that such an arrangement should exist.

2. We are persuaded that the end which that enactment was intended to fulfil, will not only be not promoted, but directly frustrated by its very nature and operation. The enactment requires "the Students of this University who shall matriculate after this session, to attend the demonstrations of a teacher of anatomy appointed by the Trustees." What is its end? It can only be, first, *the interest of the pupil*, and second, *that of the teacher and school combined*:—the instructors and the incorporated system called a school being only the means of effecting a certain result, that is, the adequate preparation of the young men of this country for the high and responsible duties of the medical profession. It is only as



being the means of attaining such an end that colleges,—professors,—laws,—every thing, become an object of interest or importance.

1. We enquire first, therefore, whether the law in question provides for the *interest of the Student*? It does not, for several reasons. Dissection, to be profitable, requires for its execution a quiet and retired apartment, subjects for study, with an intelligent and attentive instructor. Does the enactment ensure beyond the possibility of failure, either of these requisites? The last two, it is confessed, are as readily procured in a public as in a private room, but the first is far from being certain, nor is it the least of the three considerations. It is not a puerile fancy, it is a point of practical importance, and no one who has tried it can have failed to remark how inconvenient and unprofitable it is to attempt the study of practical anatomy in a room, crowded not only by a dissecting class, but by as many strangers as please to walk in and overlook.—How greatly must these disadvantages be multiplied, when, as the enactment proposes, there shall be gathered together, in one room, one hundred and fifty men at liberty to create as much noise and confusion as they please? Nor does the provision secure the last of the requisites named with more certainty than did the arrangement which has heretofore existed. The same talent and efficiency in an instructor, the same facilities of every character, can be as easily obtained if the Demonstrator's department be unprotected by a single law as if it were guarded by a thousand.

It cannot be supposed for a moment that the enactment had in view any thing like the exercise of a paternal supervision of the students, as of individuals incapable of selecting for themselves, between the Anatomical Schools formerly existing in the vicinity of the University. The idea is discarded as unworthy:—And finally we do not discern wherein the provisions of the law are likely to *benefit the Student*: an object the first in magnitude, of those we have said can alone be proposed.

2. Can it favour the success of the teacher of Anatomy, or the prosperity of the whole University? It cannot—for although it may bring into the purse of the demonstrator, a little larger amount of money than would accrue if the same number of pupils were shared among several; yet if the enactment be so obnoxious to the young men of the country at large as it seems likely to be, how shall the number fail to diminish;—how shall the College itself fail to become unpopular at home and abroad, not in Maryland only, but in the neighbouring states where the dissatisfaction felt by those now here will assuredly be industriously disseminated. Even the caprices of youth must be provided against—if indeed, the prejudices now engendered be capricious. There are other and illustrious Seminaries of Medical Learning, and those very caprices of youth make a hair's weight turn the balance in favour of either of one or the other of those within their reach. An obnoxious enactment, therefore—and especially one which is obnoxious because it seems to interfere with what is deemed their *privilege* as men, will repel them with more power than the sober discreetness of a ripper age will believe to be possible. Who shall say, therefore, that the effect of the measure now under discussion will not be positively detrimental to the College, and, by consequence, pernicious to the interests of all its teachers?

If the law be injudicious and hurtful to the interests of the Students, Professors, and the whole Institution, it would seem superfluous to demonstrate that such a provision was unnecessary; we will illustrate the fact, however, by saying that the *former organization of the Anatomical Department was an efficient one*: and the testimony shall be in the increasing prosperity of the Institution; and the circumstance, well known in almost every part of the country, that Baltimore presented more facilities for Anatomical Learning than any other Institution in the United States, and the equally notorious belief that these advantages were due chiefly to the number of rival Schools existing in the city. The rivalry of these Schools, conducted by enterprising and aspiring men, begetting an emulation, and infusing a high moving ambition which will avail more to make able Instructors and distinguished Physicians than any restrictive dispensation such as that now alluded to can possibly do. It was *unnecessary* because the College flourished thus without it, and because the *Anatomical Department* (which may to the Board, have been a subject of apprehension) is absolutely incapable of languishing while the University prospers; for with no *protective* inhibitions to favour it, a moderate share of talents, a proper degree of industry, and above all, that *conforming* manner which marks the *Gentleman* will as certainly guarantee success as they exist. We only ask that it may, as heretofore, *be let alone*.

It will be seen, therefore, that we esteem the enactment not only incapable of subserving any beneficial purpose, but promising to be absolutely pernicious; and even if it were *innocent* in its tendencies, its existence is clearly *not needed*.

In suing for the repeal of this enactment, we are conscious that ours is no *perfect* right. To some of us it is a matter



of little *personal* interest, since our connexion with the University will be dissolved before the law comes into operation. It is of *no* interest further than we feel desirous to arrest at its beginning a train of ominous events, which may produce the decline of a School whose name we wish long to revere as that of our *alma mater*, and whose ignominy, if such must be, cannot fail to attach in some degree, to ourselves, her alumni. If we *have but this* concern in the result, then is our appeal the more disinterested, and its influence ought to be enhanced in proportion. It is offered with the views we have professed and *none others*—we would effect our purpose not by menace or turbulent remonstrance, but in that temper of amicable and enlightened compromise, which so well become parties professing a common faith, and engaged in the common pursuit of *knowledge*—remembering that the correction of an injudicious measure may be the dictate of prudence, and is as honourable as it is wise.

It is the desire of the body whom we represent that an immediate reply be returned them through their committee; otherwise a number of those who sanction this address (their signatures show that at least eighty out of one hundred and thirty do) may leave this Institution at its session's close in March with such impressions as may influence them, and through them their *friends*, greatly to the prejudice of the School in whose *name we all feel a deep and*

We are, with sentiments of profound respect,

Your obedient servants,

CHARLES MINOR  
J. A. TAYLOR,  
J. P. SMITH,  
P. H. GILMER,  
O. W. KEAN,  
WILLIAM G. EDWARDS,  
A. H. BAYLY,  
ROSS PEARCE,  
C. R. MCLELLAN,  
WILLIAM POWER,  
M. M. PALLER,  
J. C. JENIFER,  
WASHINGTON LINDLEY,  
D. C. DE LEON,  
J. H. THOMAS.



J. H. THOMAS  
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 WASHINGTON  
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